



NEWS RELEASE

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HAMPTON, VIRGINIA: BUILDING A REPUTATION AS THE "MOTORSPORTS TECHNOLOGY CAPITAL OF NORTH AMERICA"

*-- Preliminary market analysis results confirm growing trend in performance engineering
technology research by the automotive racing industry --*

(Hampton, Virginia) – Hampton is gearing up for a most unusual race in the automotive industry—to become the "Motorsports *Technology* Capital of North America." Preliminary market analysis results, completed by *Frost Motorsports, LLC.*, confirm that Hampton is a viable location for motorsports related companies seeking technology resources applicable to the fastest growing market in the industry--performance engineering technology. "Hampton and the region's concentration of resources such as the **NASA Langley Research Center** and **Old Dominion University's Langley Full Scale Tunnel** add to the area's overall assets from labor pool, regional automotive and

transportation base, development opportunities to university and college facilities,” says Ray White, Director, City of Hampton, Department of Economic Development.

- more -

Hampton, Virginia – Motorsports Technology Capital of North America – page 2

For 2002, the U.S. motorsports market shows a value of \$16.45 billion, with the performance engineering market estimated at \$5 billion and growing. Trends indicate that this market is showing the fastest growth and forecasted to increase by 60% within the next five years. (*Source: 2002 research prepared by the Motorsports Research Association for the Motorsports Industry Association*). The potential economic savings to the motorsports industry to have facilities with access to \$4 billion in hard assets and technology transfer opportunities in one location – Hampton, Virginia - has tremendous impact.

According to the *Frost Motorsports Market Analysis*, technology is a critical component of motorsports today. The motorsports industry requires a unique skill set that is necessary to succeed in a competitive economy: skilled labor force, value-added activity and high rates of research and development expenditures. “Over the last few years, one major component remains constant in the motorsports industry --- the need for “faster and safer” automobiles is a primary concern for everyone no matter what their role,” says Timothy Frost, *Frost Motorsports, LLC*. “For race teams and motorsports related companies, a large number of existing motorsports hubs revolve around race venues, while Hampton’s hub offers technology, education and a highly skilled workforce.”

Several years ago, Old Dominion University’s (ODU) College of Engineering and Technology, with support from the City of Hampton, approached NASA Langley Research Center to reopen and operate the tunnel as a commercial testing facility, while providing “real-world” learning experiences for graduate students. From the start, NASCAR teams showed the most interest in testing at the Hampton tunnel due to independent operation by ODU, reasonable pricing structure, excellent data correlation, large test section and central East Coast location. Open-wheel cars, NASCAR trucks and

dragsters have also tested at the facility. “Largely, as a result of revenue derived from the motorsports industry, the Langley Full Scale Tunnel was successful in recouping all

- more -

Hampton, Virginia – Motorsports Technology Capital of North America – page 3

startup costs and generating surplus revenue within two and one half years of its operation,” comments Eric Koster, Director of Motorsports Operations at the Langley Full Scale Tunnel.

Building upon this base, the Hampton Motorsports Technology Alliance has a successful track record of promoting the area’s resources and NASA Langley’s Research Center’s technology transfer opportunities to the motorsports industry. The synergy between aerospace and motorsports is apparent from aerodynamic applications to structure and materials (weight, strength/durability, sensors, adhesive, tire friction performance analysis, and human factors). This huge technical resource is available to partner with companies and institutions in joint efforts to commercialize applied aerospace research.

In the U.S., there are approximately 24,000 businesses and 120,000 employees currently working in the industry. Per capita, Hampton and its neighboring cities boasts the highest concentration of scientists, engineers and technicians, second only to the Silicon Valley. Racing teams and motorsport related companies can tap into a labor pool that is prepared for the task at hand. In addressing long-term workforce issues, the Hampton Motorsports Technology Alliance is also taking a proactive approach by fostering partnerships with the educational community by developing a motorsports curriculum and student interactive activities.

Through industry feedback, this preliminary study has identified the major capital resources necessary to position Hampton as the “Motorsports Technology Capital of North America.” They include the Langley Full Scale Tunnel; seven-post test rig; computational fluid dynamics capabilities; advance measurement techniques; and rolling road balance for the wind tunnel. Of these five key facilities, two are in place: The Langley Full Scale Tunnel with its replacement value at approximately \$40 million

combined with its computational services division representing nearly two thirds of the projected costs of developing all five facilities. In addition, discussions are currently being undertaken to utilize excess capacity of NASA Langley Research Center facilities

- more -

Hampton, Virginia – Motorsports Technology Capital of North America – page 4

for motorsports research. These facilities have the capability of developing breakthrough technologies for the industry. Safety, human performance, structures, materials, and sensors are all technologies in which this region excels.

Over a six-month period, *Frost Motorsports* has assessed Hampton and the region's capabilities relative to the high performance automotive industry and related facilities; projected potential economic impact; and examined other related spin-off opportunities. Other factors such as the usage of wind tunnel by motorsports teams and automobile manufactures and NASA technology transfer opportunities within this industry were also explored. *Frost Motorsports* anticipates the final results of the market analysis will be completed within 30 days.

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